



HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING

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# TECHNICAL STAFF REPORT

## Planning Board Meeting of May 16, 2013

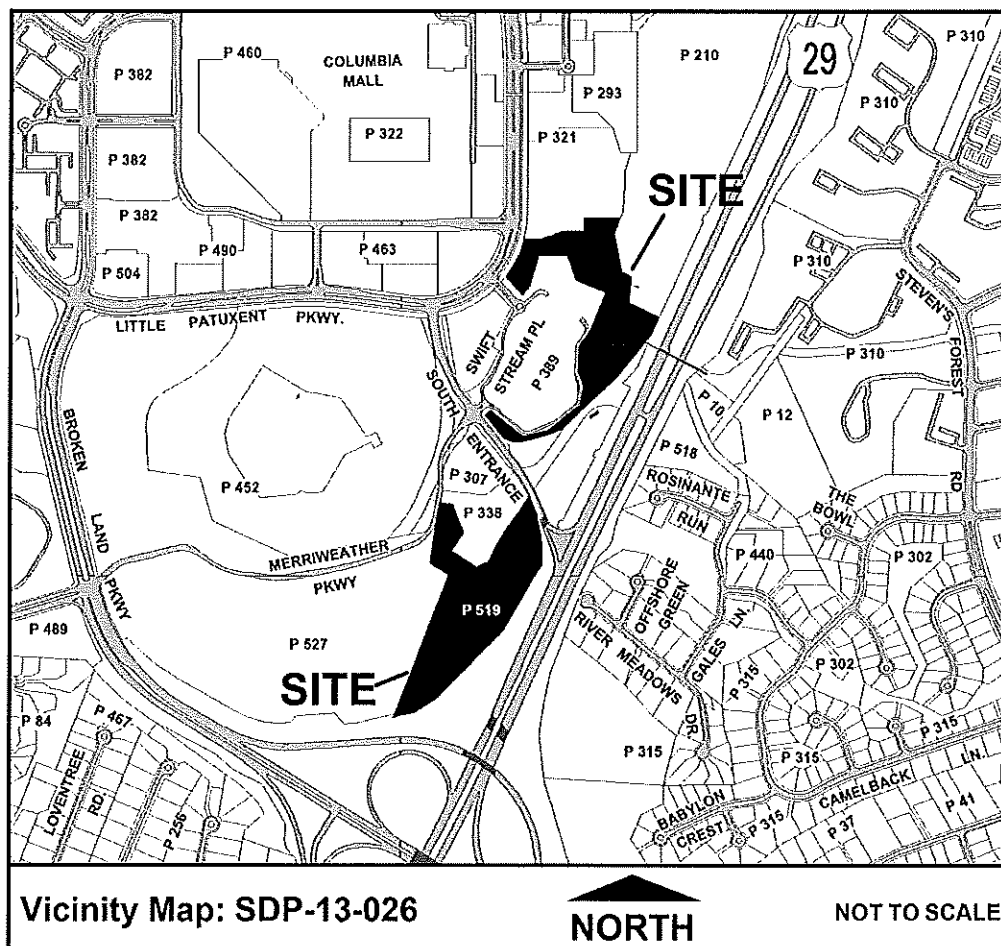
**Plan:** SDP-13-026, Downtown Columbia Forest Enhancement

**Petitioner:** The Howard Hughes Corporation

**Request:** The request is for Planning Board approval of Site Development Plan SDP-13-026, consisting of forest enhancement, through reforestation and invasive vegetation removal, of two sites in Downtown Columbia. The project is proposed in order to satisfy Community Enhancement, Program and Public Amenities (CEPPA's) 7 and 15 of the Downtown Columbia Plan (see Site History, below.).

DPZ Recommendation: *Approval.*

**Location:** The proposed development is located in Section 1, Area 3 and Section 5, Areas 2, 3 and 4 of Columbia Town Center. These areas are generally located south of Lake Kittamaqundi, west of Columbia Pike (US29), north of Broken Land Parkway and east of Symphony Woods Road, Swift Stream Place and Little Patuxent Parkway, in Columbia, Maryland. The properties are zoned NT – OS (New Town - Open Space) and cumulatively are 20.68 acres in area. Vicinal properties are occupied by commercial and residential uses.



**Site History:**

- 02/07/1997 and 08/13/1999: Final Development Plans FDP-139-A-III and FDP-234 recorded, respectively, establishing map and criteria governing subject property.
- 04/06/2010: Council Bill 59-2009 made effective as part of the NT Zoning Regulations. The amendment included the requirement that prior to certain phases of the Downtown Revitalization Phasing Plan that certain Community Enhancements, Programs and Public Amenities (CEPPA's) would be implemented. The following CEPPA's are pertinent to SDP-13-026:
  - CEPPA 7: "GGP will submit a phasing schedule for implementation of the restoration work on GGP's property and a site development plan for the first phase of the environmental restoration work as described in CEPPA No. 15." (The phasing schedule was submitted to DPZ on November 6, 2012.)
  - CEPPA 15: "GGP will complete, at GGP's expense, environmental restoration projects, including stormwater management retrofit, stream corridor restoration, wetland enhancement, reforestation and forest restoration, on its property and on property included within GGP's construction plans for the Merriweather-Symphony Woods and Crescent areas, as identified in the Land Framework of the Sustainability Program as referenced in Section 3.1 of this Plan."
- 11/30/2012: Site Development Plan SDP-13-026 submitted to DPZ by Petitioner.
- 04/09/2013: Petitioner notified by DPZ that the plan may be approved subject to Planning Board approval.

**Site Improvements** - Proposed site improvements include the enhancement of existing forest resources in Downtown Columbia.

**Environmental Considerations** - A portion of the project is proposed in stream buffers and the 100-year floodplain, and will result in an ecological benefit to these areas.

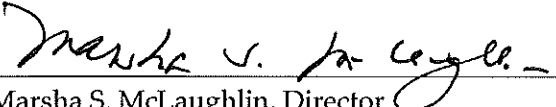
**Landscaping** - The project complies with the Howard County New Town Alternative Compliance provision of the Howard County Landscape Manual by meeting or exceeding the requirements of Section 16.124 of the Howard County Code and the Landscape Manual.

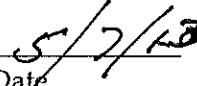
**Evaluation and Conclusions** - The site development plan complies with all applicable requirements of Final Development Plans FDP-139-A-III and FDP-234 for open space land use areas and satisfies the Planning Board review and approval criteria found at Zoning Regulations Subsection 125.I.2. The Planning Board review and approval criteria are: a. The project conforms with the adopted Downtown Columbia Plan; and b. The project conforms with the Downtown-Wide Design Guidelines pertaining to environmental restoration.

**SRC Action:** The DPZ, Division of Land Development, by letter dated April 26, 2013, notified the petitioner that the site development plan revision may be approved, subject to Planning Board approval.

The file for this project is available for public review at the Department of Planning and Zoning's public service counter, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

**Recommendation:** The DPZ recommends approval of Site Development Plan SDP-13-026.

  
Marsha S. McLaughlin, Director  
Department of Planning and Zoning

  
Date